

ABSTRACT

Methods and apparatus, including computer program products, implement techniques for processing data packets in a computer network. A multilayer switch is configured to process data packets at wire-speed based on one or more user defined packet policies. Each user defined packet policy specifies information for one or more of Layers 4 through 7. A multilayer switch receives the data packet, the data packet including information from Layers 2 through 7 of the OSI model. The received data packet is examined to determine if there is a match between the data packet and one or more of the packet policies, where each packet policy authorizes matching data packets to use the computer network. If there is a matching packet policy authorizing the data packet, the data packet is routed using the Layer 2-3 switch. If there is no matching packet policy authorizing the data packet, the data packet is blocked.

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